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Front Edit Other
Page Page Page

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Getting At The Truth

The more the country learns about the presidential commission to inquire into the murder of President Kennedy, the more it is likely to want the commission to be replaced by a special congressional investigating group.

Chief Justice Earl Warren, who heads the commission, is a controversial figure. He is distrusted by great numbers of persons not only in the South but in many parts of the country. A large segment of the nation will have little confidence in the work of a commission he directs. Columnists Allen and Scott have reported from Washington that Mr. Warren will choose the staff that will do the real digging. This further undermines public confidence.

The role of Allen Dulles, former head of the Central Intelligence Agency, also is open to question, though on different grounds. It is known that Lee H. Oswald, the accused assassin, was enmeshed in the activities of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. Free Cuban refugees charge that Oswald had ties to the Castro government. Mr. Dulles as director of the CIA managed undercover operations in Cuba and among Cuban groups in the United States. He might be called on for testimony regarding

Oswald's background and activities. Obviously, a man who may have to testify should not be on the investigation panel.

Another member of the presidential commission, John J. McCloy, former chairman of the Board of the Chase - Manhattan Bank, has been deeply involved in secret government discussions. The public has reason to assume that Mr. McCloy might look at the commission's final report in terms of what is shrewd government policy rather than in terms of full disclosure of all the facts.

The American people do not want the commission to come up with a biased political statement. They don't want a report that spares the CIA, if it has been negligent. Nor do they want a whitewash, a scapegoat, or a smooth cover-up for policy reasons. The American people want the truth and nothing but the truth.

Experience has made clear that the best way to get all the facts and to get them across to the public, without shading or concealment, is by means of a congressional investigation. The News and Courier hopes that South Carolina's delegation in Congress will seek the full-scale investigation which is Congress' right and duty to conduct.